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ABSTRACT

The Assessment-Confrontation-Strategizing Model for developing parent and community involvement in school decision-making consists of three stages. In the assessment stage parent perceptions of the permeability of the school's psychosocial boundaries are examined and the differing educational values held by teachers, administrators, and representatives of parents and community members are measured. Representatives of parents and the community face teachers and administrators in a three-way confrontation in the next stage, permitting members of each group to learn how they are perceived by the others and to express how they perceive themselves. In the third stage, force field analysis is used to analyze the forces revealed in the first two stages, to develop objectives, and to generate and rank strategies for meeting the objectives. This report describes the model and the sources of its processes and recounts two successful applications of the model in schools attempting to comply with the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. One school was an elementary school implementing mainstreaming with a resource room program. The other was a special school for profoundly to moderately mentally handicapped and multiply handicapped students from three county school districts. (PGD)

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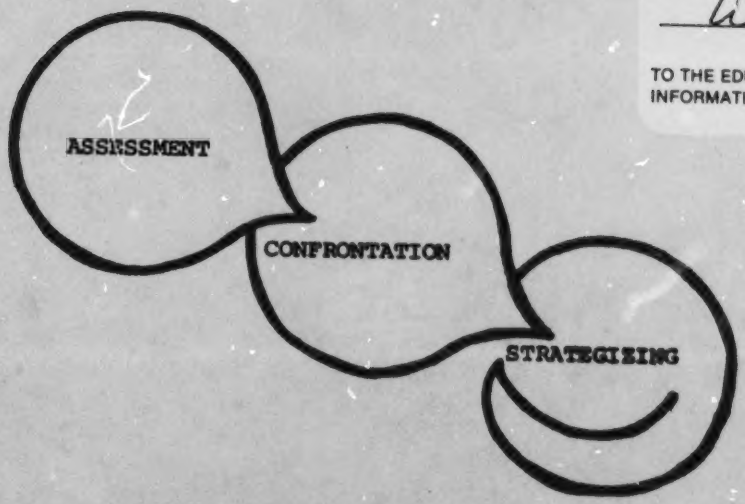

A SOCIAL SCIENCE MODEL FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

by

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EA 014 990

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Introduction:

The mandate to open the lines of parent/community-school communications seems clear in the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL 94-142) as well as in a number of state legislative trends relating to the establishment of community-based alternatives for school age populations who have previously not been served by public schools. The movement of community segments and parents form traditional roles of school supporters and silent providers of raw materials for the educative process to active participants in school programming seems to have brought to the surface an array of attitudes and behaviors of school personnel.

Apparently based upon perceptions, values toward education and the overall atmosphere of a school, teacher attitudes may range from openness and acceptance-to patronizing-to defensiveness and rejection of parental and community input. There appears to be some correlation between the success rate of school program implementation and the willingness of the school staff to indulge in a collaborative effort with parents.

Trends toward providing handicapped students with educational services within the Least Restrictive Environment appear to compound problems in establishing positive parent-school relationships. The unfamiliarity of regular classroom teachers with previously self-contained 'special education' students, along with some non-normalizing stereotypes of handicapped children that they may hold seems to have caused resistance to mainstreaming efforts and complimentary hostility on the part of parents of exceptional children.

Problems that appear to result from changes in the roles of teachers and parents within the educational system seem to underly the need for a model to facilitate parent/community-school communications, with the goal of implementing instructional programs. The initial stage of such a model needed to focus upon assessing the present status of the school within its environment. This is analogous to the behavioristic approach to individual change where baseline data must be collected to find the individual's operant level. Comparable to an individual change program, baseline data about the school and its relationship to parents and community can be used to isolate problem areas and as a standard of comparison to gauge the impact of intervention strategies. Although this paper will be concerned with the area of parent/community-school relationships, a thorough baseline collection should elicit information about teachers' perceptions of their school, its administration and attitude towards programmatic change and their general attitudes toward education. Such information will indicate the presence of internal variables that may need to be dealt with before change strategies can be successfully inplemented.

The second stage of the model invloves confrontation of the problems that are revealed by the assessment stage. Through direction confrontation, teachers, parents, community representitives, and administrators may gain insight into interpersonal, organizational and programmatic variables that may impede or enhance the implementation of the desired change.

Following confrontation, strategizing may take place. As all facets of the school environment are aware of the per-

ceptions each group has of the other, as well as the problem areas that need to be addressed, they may jointly generate strategies that capitalize upon the strengths of the constituent groups to ameliorate some of the problem areas they have isolated.

The objectives of this paper are two-fold; primarily, to present a model for facilitating parent/community-school communications with the goal of implementing programmatic change; specifically in the area of Special Education. A second objective is to illustrate the application of this model, that rests upon concepts grounded in social psychology, to the school setting. This will be accomplished through the use of a case study approach describing two schools faced with the problem of eliciting parental and community input for educational planning. School A may be representitive of an elementary school (Grades K-8) attempting to implement a contimuum of services for handicapped children. In this school, the shift form self-contained classrooms to mainstreaming appeared to cause anxiety and suspicion among both parents and teachers.

School B may be representitive of an attempt to implement a special school for profound-to-moderately mentally handicapped students. Feelings of suspicion and anxiety also seemed to be prevalent among parents and segments of the community in the school neighborhood as the school began operation

Theoretical Framework:

The Assessment Stage of the Assessment-to Confrontation-to Strategizing Model is grounded in Katz and Kahn's (1967) elaboration of Lewin's (1951) concept of group boundary lines and their permeability. They suggest that a social system is surrounded by a psychological boundary insulating it from its environment. The degree to which this boundary is permeable to input from the environment of the social system is directly proportional to the openness of the system. Applying this concept to a school situation, an openness continuum concerning parental and community input into the school might range from totally closed; i.e., a school where parents were completely isolated from interacting with school personnel on any matters, to completely open; i.e., a school where parents were totally free to enter any classroom at any time and interact with all school personnel. In terms of boundary permeability, the totally closed school suggests a solidification of system boundaries, while the completely open school reflects extremely permeable boundaries.

To ascertain the degree to which the school is open to input from its environment, the Parent-School Communications Questionnaire (P.S.C.Q.) was devised by Wiener and Blumberg (1973) and revised by Wiener (1975). Respondents are asked to rate each of the twenty-five items on the questionnaire on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "this is always true" to "this is never true." Each item is to be answered on the basis of what the respondents feel or know to be the case in their child's school, whether or not they have had any direct experience with the particular situation.

The P.S.C.Q. can provide an assessment of parents' perceptions of the openness of the school on the following factors:

Factor I-Teacher-Parent Interaction-

Items on the dimension tap the quality of interaction between parent and teacher as perceived by the respondent. Statements deal with perceptions of teacher's attitude toward parental contacts, their receptivity of negative feedback, and the interpersonal climate of parent-teacher communications.

Factor II-Parent-Principal Interaction:

This dimension contains statements concerning the quality of interaction between parents and the school administrator. Perceptions of how the principal views parent contacts and the parent organization, his receptiveness to negative feedback, the climate of parent-principal encounters are measured.

Factor III-Assessibility:

The nine items included in this factor concern the parent's perception of the mechanics involved in making contact with school personnel, the tone of school-to-home communications, and the impact the parents perceive they have on their child's teacher.

Scoring the P.S.C.Q. involves the computation of item means from the responses. These means may be plotted on a profile form to enable feedback to be given in an understandable graphic manner.

A complimentary facet of the Assessment Stage of the model is provided by Schutz (1967) in his FIRO (Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation) theory (Schutz, 1958). Schutz (1958) conceptualized that motivation for behavior could be attributed to an individual's desire to satisfy the three basic needs of Wanted and Expressed Inclusion, Control, and Affection.

In addition, the instrument provides a measurement of the importance of the school's attempts to meet the child's abilities and whether the focus of the school is on developing the whole child or simply his mind.

The Val-Ed is one-hundred-twenty-six item instrument which yields fourteen scores in the following areas:

1. Importance (IMP): the degree to which education has intrinsic value beyond its occupational advantages.
2. Mind (Mind): The degree to which the school should concern itself primarily with developing the mind of the student rather than with developing his whole personality.
3. School-Child: Control (SC:C): The degree to which the school should help the child to realize and use his own abilities and judgement most effectively.
4. Teacher-Child: Control (TC:C): The degree to which the teacher should regulate completely, classroom lessons and activities.
5. Teacher-Child: Affection: (TC:A): The degree to which a teacher should be personally friendly and warm toward the children.
6. Teacher-Community: Inclusion (TC:C): The degree to which the teacher should participate in community activities and should be encouraged to do so by community members.
7. Teacher-Community: Control (TC:C): The degree to which the teacher should conform to the dominant values of the community.
8. Teacher-Community: Affection (TC:A): The degree to which the teachers and the people in the community should be personally friendly to each other.
9. Administrator-Teacher: Inclusion (AT:I): The degree to which the administrator should take account of teacher's opinions when making policy decisions.
10. Administrator-Teacher: Control (AT:C): The degree to which the administrator should control the activities of the teachers, both in the classroom and in the community.
11. Administrator-Teacher: Affection (AT:A): The degree to which the administrator should be personally close with teachers and express his feelings openly.
12. Administrator-Community: Inclusion (ACm:I): The degree to which the administrator and the people in the community should be involved jointly in school and community affairs.
13. Administrator-Community: Control (ACm:C): The degree to which the desires of the community should determine school policy.
14. Administrator-Community: Affection (ACm:A): The degree to which the administrator and the people in the community should be personally friendly with each other.

Scores range from a low of zero to a high of nine indicating the degree to which the respondent values a particular area.

While the P.S.C.Q. provides information regarding parents perceptions of the permeability of the school's boundaries, data from administration of the Val-Ed to parents and community representitives, teachers, and the school administrator can reveal the degree of congruence of values toward education between these groups and assist in the isolation of areas that may underlie conflict. It appears that discrepancies in value orientations of the groups that compose the school environment may cause resistance to programmatic and organizational change. Thus, an assessment of values held by these groups concerning what the school should be, may isolate some of the reasons for problems in parent/community-school communications.

The Confrontation stage of the model is based upon the Three-Dimensional Confrontation Design conceptualized by Blumberg and Golembiewski (1967) and implemented by Blumberg and Wiener (1971) to facilitate the merger of two organizations. The three-way confrontation enables the various segements of an organization to clarify their perceptions of each other. Through stating perceptions of themselves, perceptions of the other group or groups, and how they feel the other groups perceives them, Many problems of an interpersonal nature that may be inhibiting communication are brought to the surface for discussion.

It was felt that engagement of parents and community representitives, teachers, and the administrator in a three-

way confrontation would serve to free up intergroup communications systems so that each group would be able to talk with the others about planning for the implementation of change in a meaningful way. The three-way confrontation is a relatively simple exercise that involves asking the groups to focus their attention on three questions: How do we see and describe ourselves? How do we see and describe the other groups? How do we think the other groups see and describe us? Following the generation of phrases or description by each group, list are posted for general sharing. During the sharing session, groups and individuals may ask questions for elaboration or analyze their own data and those of the other groups. The only ground rule during the sharing sessions is that the individuals invloved do not react defensively. Thus, the intent of the three-way confrontation is to form a basis for problem solving, rather than conflict. Use of this design also serves to dispell the 'organizational garbage' that may be impeding communication between the groups and provide additional data that may be used in the strategizing stage.

Lewin's concept of Force Field Analysis (1953) forms the foundation of the Strategizing of the model. Lewin hypothesized that inducing change in an individual or group requires an 'unfreezing' of present attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors, movement to a new level of operation, and 'refreezing' at that new level. Thus, change may be viewed as bringing about a shift in some part of the individual or group's 'field', thereby eliciting an alteration in attitude, belief and/or behavior.

Simply stated, a Force Field refers to a number of driving and restraining forces pertaining to thinking,

behaving, believing, etc., that hold an individual or group in a relatively stable state or "quasi-stationary equilibrium" (Lewin, 1953). A modification in the balance of driving and/or restraining forces tends to disturb or 'unfreeze' the equilibrium, causing change to take place with the individual or group 're-frozen' at a new level as a result of the homeostatic process.

Force Field Analysis enables the delineation of the driving and restraining forces that appear to be holding a group or organization in a state of quasi-stationary equilibrium and the formulation of strategies to increase the potency of driving forces, decrease the impact of restraining forces or transform restraining into driving forces.

The use of Force Field Analysis in the model involves four steps. The first step makes use of the data from the assessment and confrontation stages. It consists of categorizing the results of the data collection as either driving or restaining forces and noting the potency of each force. A second step involves formulation of an initial objective; i.e., based upon the data, what is a reasonable goal for the organization? A review of the driving and restraining forces may suggest a number of objectives; however, a close examination of the forces may indicate one objective that is basic and critical to the immediate needs of the organization.

After an objective has been specified, strategy generation may take place. Strategizing is similar to brainstorming as any ideas to assist in meeting the objective are listed. The only rule to be observed is that each strategy should be designed to strengthen one or more of the driving

forces, decrease the potency of restraining forces, or transform a restraining force into a driving force. After strategies have been generated, they may be prioritized, with the most practical and easiest to implement in first priority.

The Strategizing stage may be accomplished in a large group or by dividing parents and community representitives, teachers, and the administrator into cross-constituent groups to generate their own Force Field Analyses, strategies and priorities. If the latter option is selected, groups are requested to share their work in order to construct a Force Field and enumerate strategies and priorties that may be endorsed by the entire group.

During the strategizing and prioritizing phase, it is important to note the individual or group who will implement the strategy, as well as the time frame for implementation.

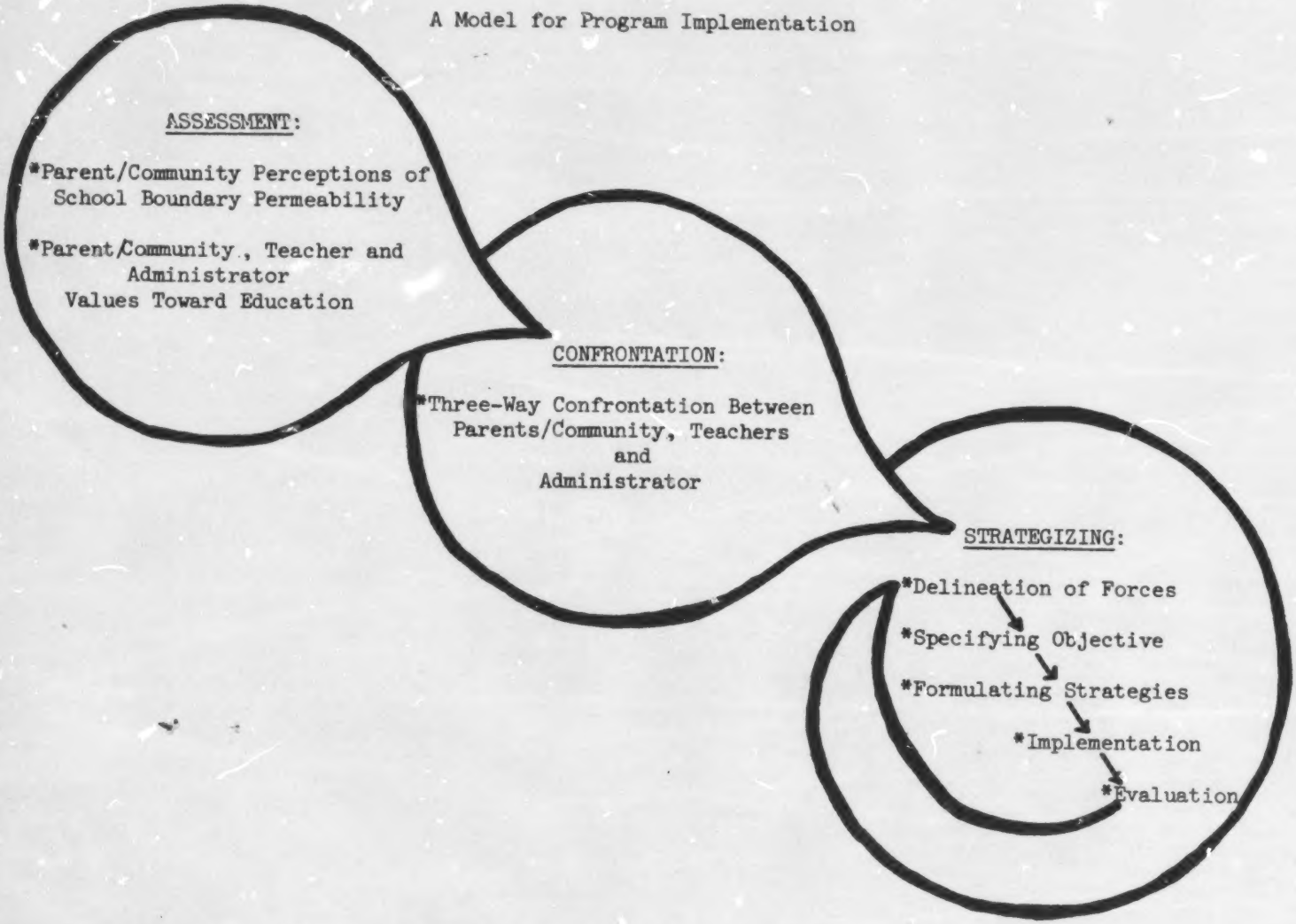
Once strategies have been defined and tasks for implementation have been agreeded upon the entire group or representitives from each of the groups may meet periodically to evaluate the results of the strategies. This may be accomplished by constructing another Force Field Analysis and generating additional objectives, strategies and priorities for meeting the terminal goal of program implmentation.

Figure I illustrates the process of the Assessment-to Confrontation-to Strategizing Model.

FIGURE I

ASSESSMENT - TO CONFRONTATION - TO STRATEGIZING:

A Model for Program Implementation



Methods and Source of Data:

The Assessment-to Confrontation-to Strategizing Model was applied to two schools where the author contracted to act as consultant. Both schools were in the midst of attempting to implement the mandates of PL 94-142. School A had been directed by the superintendent of schools to begin mainstreaming and providing resource room services for Educable Mentally Handicapped students who had been served in self-contained classrooms the preceding year. School B was faced with the problem of establishing a school for profoundly-to-moderately mentally handicapped and mulithandicapped to serve students from three contingent school districts. Many of the students attending School B had never recieved educational services. They lacked the skills necessary to function in a school environment and, prior to the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, could legally be excluded from school programs.

School A was one of six elementary schools (Grades K-8) in a rural county school district. The school was located in a small town (population-1,500) and had an enrollment of approximately 800 students. School A employed twenty-six regular classroom teachers (three teachers on each grade level and two kindergarten teachers), two teachers for the Educable Mentally Handicapped, one teacher for a Learning Disability Resource Program, a principal who had spent the past sixteen of his thirty years in education at this school, and a full-time custodian who at times functioned in the role of principal.

The request for a transformation from self-contained to a resource arrangement had been made during the final weeks of the school year. Although the concept was fully explained to the principal, materials made available to him to assist in the implementation of the program and he was urged to explain the concept to his regular and special

classroom teachers before the end of the school year, he closed school without sharing any information about the resource room or the mainstreaming of exceptional children that would take place the following fall. He reasoned that with one of the special education teachers leaving the district and the other off on maternity leave, it would be better to leave well enough alone until school began.

With two new special education teachers, the principal introduced the concept of the resource room approach to his faculty during the week preceding the opening of school. The regular classroom teachers were told that all special education students would be assigned to regular classrooms with the resource teachers helping them during the day. He indicated that the resource teachers would be doing the planning. After this brief introduction, implementation of the resource room concept seemed to be perceived by the principal as accomplished.

During the first half of the year, the resource room and the movement toward mainstreaming exceptional children at School A seemed to be doomed to failure. Regular classroom teachers appeared to be at a loss in dealing with the exceptional children who were not a part of their classrooms. The two resource teachers seemed to be bogged down with scheduling and testing and isolated from the rest of the faculty. Parents of the exceptional children were unclear about the resource room/mainstreaming program and annoyed with a lack of firm answers to their concerns by regular and special classroom teachers. Questions about the program from parents of 'normal' children seemed to be going unanswered. Thus, the morale of the resource teachers was low, communications with other teachers had degenerated to a level of enmity, and the relationship between teachers and parents could be characterized as 'hostile.' The principal seemed to feel

that the apparent failure of the resource room served as proof that "special kids connot learn with regular kids." He disregarded resource teachers' requests for appropriate instructional materials and gave them little assistance in working with regular classroom teachers or parents.

Realizing some of the problems at the school, the superintendent of schools and the director of special services contracted for consultant services.

As an initial step, the consultant spent two days at School A observing and talking with teachers, the principal, and any parents he found visiting the school. The teachers seemed to be highly structured, but, for the most part, adequate instructors. They appeared to be making little attempt to integrate exceptional children into the activities of the regular classroom and, in some cases, showed frustration in being unable to deal with the handicapped children. Although some teachers felt that the resource teachers provided little help in prescribing activities for the mainstreamed children, the majority of the faculty felt that the resource concept was well founded, but that implementation was impossible due to the administration and the demographic characteristics of School A (lower class and lower middle class whites with approximately 15% lower class blacks). They also indicated that had the principal given the staff more time to absorbe the resource room concept and plan for putting it into operation, the chances for success might have been higher.

There seemed to be a dichotomy between the teachers' and the principal's perceptions of what was taking place at School A. Although they both felt that the resource room was not working, the principal felt that the cause of its failure was that all of the teachers were giving their students too much independent work so that they

would have more time to socialize with each other. He appeared to have little understanding of the concept of mainstreaming or exactly what the special education teachers were doing in his school.

The parents were unclear about the role of the resource teachers and the concept of mainstreaming. Parents of 'normal' children seemed concerned that 'retarded' students in the regular classroom would lower their son or daughter's achievement. A mother of an Educable Mentally Handicapped child indicated that she was frustrated in trying to deal with the regular classroom teacher and felt that her son received better services in the self-contained classroom. Parents seemed to be irritated that they had not been informed about the programmatic change and, although they appeared to be hostile toward school personnel, they seemed reticent to speak with the principal or teachers about their concerns.

The consultant's impressions were shared with the principal and plans were made to enter the Assessment Stage of the Model. The principal agreed to go along with anything the consultant wanted to do and consented to give him some time to speak with the teachers at the next faculty meeting.

During the faculty meeting, the consultant shared his impressions with the teachers and requested them to complete the Val-Ed. Their assistance in distributing the P.S.C.Q. and the Val-Ed to parents was also elicited.

Thirty parents from each grade level (N=240) were randomly selected to complete the P.S.C.Q. and one hundred and twenty-five returned scorable responses. Another sample of thirty parents from each grade level was drawn for administration of the Val-Ed. Ninety-eight returned the completed instrument.

In addition, the principal was asked to complete a Val-Ed.

The analysis of the Val-Ed scores of teachers, principal and parents (Figure II) seemed to point out some potential problem areas. A general rule of thumb in analyzing these scores was to note differences of 2.5 or more between different groups on a specific variable as indicative of a possible incongruence of values with the potential of being a cause of problems.

Differences in the Val-Ed mean scores on the dimension of School-Child: Control (SC:C) between the principal and the parent and teacher groups seemed to indicate that the principal felt that the school should exert control over the child, rather than assist him to realize and use his own abilities and judgment. Parents'and teachers' scores in this area appeared to indicate that the role of the the school was to develop the individual's abilities within a controlled environment.

Teachers' and Parents' scores on the Mind dimension pointed out that they felt that the school should work with the whole child, rather than just his mind, while the principal's scores indicated the opposite.

The principal seemed to feel that teachers should limit their interactions with members of the community (TCm:I, TCm:A), but that he should be personally friendly with people in the community (ACm:A). His scores also indicated that the community should have a high degree of input into the policies of the school (ACm:C). The teachers' and parents' scores seemed to follow opposite trends as they indicated a moderate degree of input from the community in school policy making (ACm:C), as well as moderation in the amount of interaction and friendship between teachers and members of the community (TCm:I, TCm:A).

The degree to which the principal should take teachers' opinions into account before making policy decisions (AT:I) seemed to be

FIGURE II

Val-Ed Results for
School A

Teachers
(N=29)

	I	C	A		
TCm	5.5	4.3	5.2	5.0	SC:C
AT	6.0	3.5	4.4	3.6	IMP
ACm	4.6	5.1	5.0	3.1	MIND
TC	---	4.1	5.7	---	

Principal
(N=1)

	I	C	A		
TCm	3	6	2	2	SC:C
AT	3	4	4	3	IMP
ACm	3	8	7	7	MIND
TC	---	5	6	---	

Parents
(N=98)

	I	C	A		
TCm	6.1	5.9	5.8	4.8	SC:C
AT	5.8	4.1	4.1	3.2	IMP
ACm	6.3	5.2	4.8	4.2	MIND
TC	---	4.6	5.2	---	

2.5+ difference between respondent groups

another area of potential conflict. The principal of School A appeared to feel teacher opinion inconsequential, while teachers and parents felt moderate input from teachers advisable before policy decisions were made.

The results of the P.S.C.Q. (Figure III) seemed to point out that the principal's philosophy of community involvement in school and its application were two different things.

School A seems to be isolated from the parents whose children it serves. Although there seems to be some linkage between the school and the parent/community through the principal (Parent-Principal Interaction Factor mean = 2.47; P-P I items 2 and 5), the individual parent's attempt to make any impact on the school program or personnel are apparently perceived as ineffective (P-P I item 6; Accessibility Factor mean = 1.92).

As informal visits to the school appear to be frowned upon (A items 1, 2, and 9), it seems best for a parent to contact a teacher through written note, rather than by telephone (A item 5). When a parent does contact his child's teacher, the teacher does not seem to withold information from the parent (Teacher-Parent Interaction Factor item 4), but these encounters apparently are perceived by the parent as cold, impersonal, and likely to have little impact (T-P I mean = 1.57; T-P I items 1, 2, 3, and 8). Parents seemed to be quite hesitant about contacting their child's teacher (A item 8), perhaps due to feeling that such contact may have an adverse effect on the child (T-P I item 5).

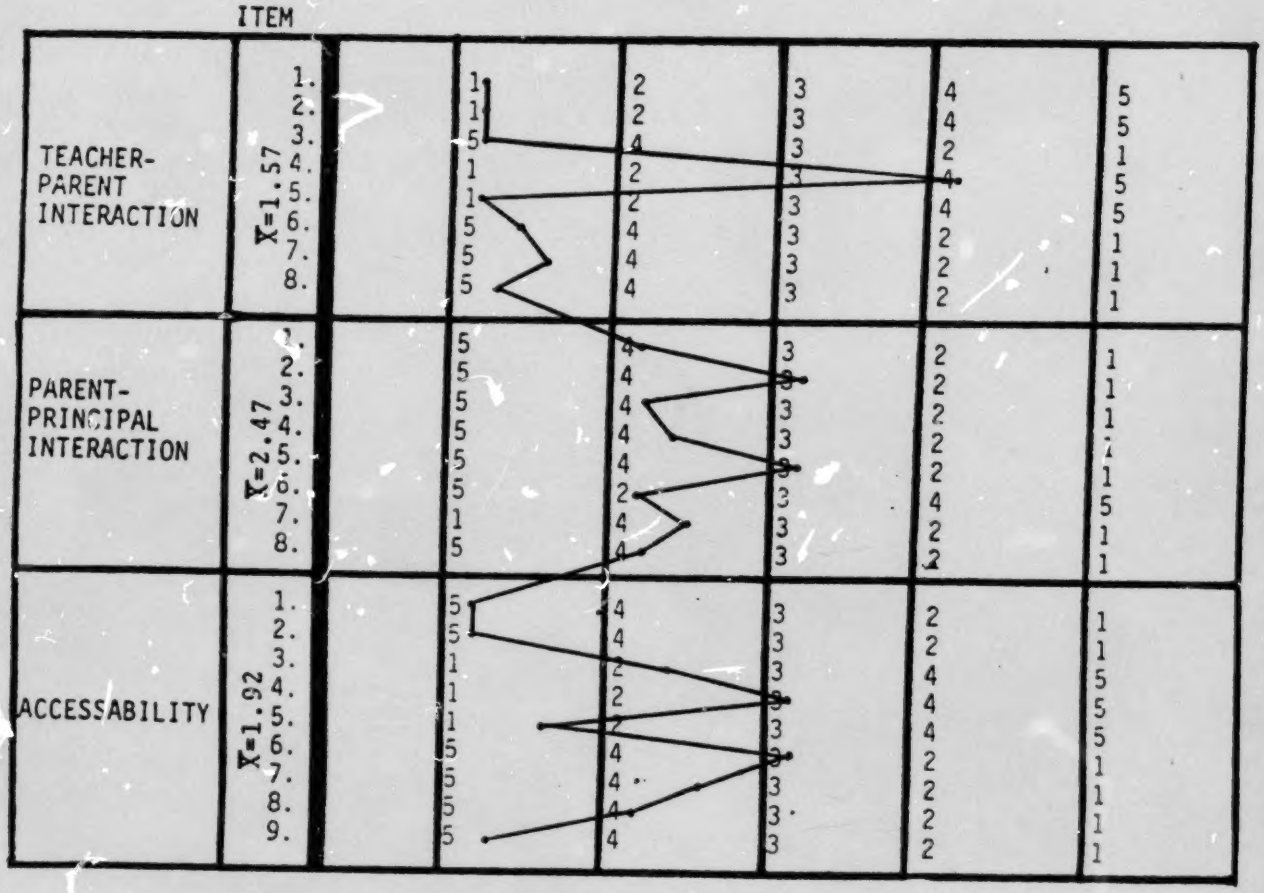
Personnel at School A seem to perceive parental contacts as more hinderance than help (T-P I item 1; P-P I item 1) and place little value upon their input into the school (P-P I item 8).

With little personal contact between parent, principal, and

FIGURE III

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

PROFILE SHEET



CLOSED----------OPEN

Name of School: School A N= 1125

District: _____

Grade Level (s): K-8; EMH and LD Resource

Date: _____

Confrontation exercise to avoid feelings of isolation and promote cohesiveness in the faculty.

The principal indicated that the consultant could facilitate the Confrontation Stage of the model, but that he would not participate. He compared mainstreaming and the resource room concept to integration during the 1960's, stating that one such 'battle' during his career was enough and that he had filed papers for retirement at the end of the school year. He asked that the consultant not share this information with the faculty as he would make an announcement of his retirement at the close of the semester.

The results of the Assessment Stage and an outline of what would take place during the Confrontation and Strategizing Stages were presented to the faculty. They appeared to be eager to participate and opted to accomplish both stages during an evening meeting. They agreed to give the consultant the right to continue the Strategizing Stage during another meeting if and when he saw a deterioration in the session.

The teachers submitted names of parents whom they felt would participate in the session and the consultant drew three names from each grade level group and two special education programs (one participant and two alternates). Teachers were asked to submit names of parents who had voiced negative opinions as well as those who seemed to be positive or neutral. Nine parents (two with children in the special education program and one from each of the seven grade levels involved) consented to participate in the Confrontation-Strategizing session.

In his opening remarks to the participants, the consultant briefly outlined the concept of the resource room and mainstreaming and gave a synopsis of the results of the Assessment Stage. He indicated that the Confrontation exercise would provide a basis for planning and enable the group to focus upon some of the specifics of the problems that appeared to be hindering program implementation.

faculty, other than the essential meetings such as parent organization gatherings or conferences (A item 6), parents seem to view School A as a place where they must send their children and unquestioningly accept its policies and practices.

The results of the assessment were shared with the principal of School A with a suggestion to use the Three Way Confrontation involving the following groups:

1. Seven-to-ten parents representing grades two through eight and the Educable Mentally Handicapped and Learning Disabilities resource programs. (Parents of children in the Kindergarten and the first grade were eliminated as their children were not involved in special placements or mainstreaming).

   Names of parents to participate would be submitted by teachers, with one parent and two alternates selected at random from each grade level and special program.

2. One group of all regular classroom teachers in grades K-3.
3. One group of all regular classroom teachers in grades 4-6.
4. One group of all regular classroom teachers in grades 7-8.
5. One group composed of the special education teachers.
6. The principal.

The reason for dividing the regular classroom teachers into three groups was to allow for differences of perceptions by grade level (primary, elementary, and middle school) and utilize smaller groups for maximum input. As the issue involved the special education program, the regular classroom teacher groups would focus on generating perceptions of themselves, parents, resource teachers, and the principal and how they felt these groups perceived them, rather than how they perceived the other groups of regular classroom teachers. The other groups would be asked to state their perceptions of regular classroom teachers as a whole, rather than as grade level groups. Although Kindergarten and First Grade teachers were not involved in the special education programs, they were asked to participate in the

The principal could not be present due to prior commitment, but, the consultant noted that he had sanctioned the meeting.

The results of the Three Way Confrontation are found in Figure IV. Each group wrote their responses on newsprint which was posted around the room for inspection by other groups. During the clarification portion of the exercise, many items that could be termed 'organizational garbage' were brought to light. For example, a clarification of the regular classroom teachers' perception of the resource teachers as "Standoffish" and "having too much free time" revealed that the resource teachers were seen two periods a day in the school library rather than in their classroom. The resource teachers indicated that their classroom had been scheduled for use by the music teacher during these periods and that they had no other place to go. They indicated that they had wanted to use a portion of this time to meet with regular classroom teachers but the principal had instructed them not to disturb teachers during the day. A rebuff by the sixth grade teachers to an offer of help at the beginning of the school year had led the resource teachers to be guarded in their interactions. One bone of contention between the regular and resource personnel was that one of the resource teachers dressed in a stylish and well-tailored manner. This led to such descriptions as 'She looks like a model; Trying to impress everyone,' etc. As clarification, the resource teacher indicated that she made her own clothes and had learned to produce patterns from fashion magazine pictures. She offered to teach the technique to anyone who was interested and assured the group that she was by no means wealthy or attempting to be impressive.

Parents learned that teachers time before and after school was limited by bus and cafeteria duty and daily reports and that this was a factor in their curt behavior. They were trying to meet deadlines set by the principal so that they could leave for home by 4:00. They also found that teachers had no time for planning and that the principal was absent from the school during portions of

FIGURE IV

Results of
Three Way Confrontation

I. REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHERS
(Composite List)
N=29

A. We See Ourselves As:

Openminded
Concerned for Students
Cooperative
Intelligent
Honest
Talented
Industrious
Innovative
Comedians (When the time comes)
Professional
Punchy
Absent minded
Spread Thin
Hard workers
No time to plan without kids
Patient
In need of more materials
Sweet and sour
Enthusiastic
Discouraged
Behind
Deprived
Underpriviledged
Suppressed
Compassionate
Jealous
Hurried
Coerced
Harried
Dedicated
Argumentative
Outspoken
Smart
Volunteering
Overworked and underpaid

B. We See the Resource Teachers As:

Interested
Concerned about each child
Compassionate to students
Artistic and creative
Innovative
Sometimes Cooperative
Great Helpers
Hard workers
Individualized
She looks like a Model
Busy
Agreeable
Industrious
Having more materials
Friendly
Getting along well with children
Standoffish
Having an easy job
Afraid of us
Having too much free time
Different from us
Trying to impress everyone

C. We See Parents As:

Interested
Hard working
Afraid of Teachers
Not having much time for their children
Feeling school is a babysitting service
Uneducated

C. We See Parents As...(Cont'd)

Having no compassion for us
Caring
Having little understanding of the education process
Resentful of us

D. Resource Teachers See Us As:

Cooperative (trying to work with them)
Concerned
Overloaded with Duty
Helpers
Friends
Conscientious
Helpful
Gossipy
Uncooperative
Critical
Not understanding
Hard to get along with
Jealous of them

E. Parents See Us As:

Professionals
Concerned about their children
Having an easy job
Uncaring about them
Uncooperative
Not having time to talk with them
On a different wave-length
Too educated

FIGURE IV

Results of
Three Way Confrontation

II. RESOURCE TEACHERS
N=3

A. We See Ourselves As:

Cooperative (We try to work with them)
Concerned about our students
Inexperienced
Frustrated
Enthusiastic
Having inadequate supplies
Good at what we do

B. We See The Regular Classroom Teachers As:

Not talking with us
Lacking training for working with exceptional children
Having too high an expectation for exceptional children
Having more supplies
Having a general distrust and low opinion of exceptional children
Not having enough confidence in us
Thinking they are better than us

C. We See Parents As:

Avoiding us
Confused about their child's program
Afraid to express their concerns
Willing to help, but not knowing what to do
Hard working
Concerned about their children
Well meaning

D. Regular Classroom Teachers See Us As:

Having it easy with a low class load- no lunch reports or registers
Not teaching any academics, but using our time to entertain students
Unprofessional
Having all the answers and immediate results for problems
Being Better than they are

E. Parents See Us As:

Wanting to help
Open
Caring about their kids
Unable to supply enough answers
Unwilling to assert ourselves

FIGURE IV

Results of
Three Way Confrontation

III. PARENTS
N=9

A. We See Ourselves As:

Caring about how our children do in school
Working hard
Good parents
Interested
Not having enough time to spend with our kids
Not having a chance to talk with the teachers
Having to do what they tell us
Not wanting to make trouble
Churchgoers
Mad

B. We See Regular Classroom Teachers As:

Cold
They don't like us
Afraid to talk to us
Good
Teaching what they're supposed to
Think they're better then us
Stuck-up
Too smart
Unfriendly

C. We See Resource Teachers As:

Well dressed
Don't know what they do
Probably like the other teachers

D. Regular Classroom Teachers See Us As:

A pain in the neck
Uneducated
Not caring about school
Stupid
Meddlers
Wanting to get our kids educated
Working hard

E. Resource Teachers See Us As:

The same as the other teachers because we don't know what they do

the day, socializing with friends or playing golf. During his absence, the custodian was in charge of providing teacher supplies and disciplining students. This 'insight' seemed to be quite irritating to teachers and parents.

The Confrontation Stage Stage appeared to illuminate three areas that were impeding communications and successful program implementation. These included:

1. A general lack of information about the Resource Room Model in special education and the concept of mainstreaming.
2. The principal's behavior and style of leadership.
3. School policies and procedures that seemed to inhibit interaction between teachers and with parents.

At the conclusion of the Confrontation Stage, the consultant gave the participants the option of setting up an an additional meeting for the Strategizing Stage or continuing that evening. The group unanimously wished to continue as they felt that the lines of communication had been opened and some cohesiveness had been established between the parents and the teacher groups.

The consultant gave a brief presentation of the theory and technique of Force Field Analysis. He requested the participants to break into five heterogeneous groups of eight to construct Force Fields based upon the data generated from the Assessment and Confrontation Stages. He indicated that each group would be given a half hour to work on their Force Fields before reconvening for the purpose of generating a composite Force Field Analysis and delineating objectives and strategies.

Figure V contains the composite Force Field Analysis.

Based upon the Force Field, a number of strategies were generated and prioritized to meet the general goal of 'joint collaboration between parents-regular classroom teachers-and resource teachers for the provision of educational services to exceptional children in a resource room/mainstreaming situation.' The strategies included:

1. Appoint a task force of the group to formulate specific objectives and a plan for program implementation which they will present within a two week period. Invite the principal to participate

FIGURE V

Force Field Analysis
School A

DRIVING FORCES:	RESTRAINING FORCES:
Regular and Special Teachers wish to cooperate with each other,	Teachers lack planning time.
All parents and teachers concerned about children	Parents-Teachers and administration lack an understanding of the Resource Program
Parents wish to understand Resource Program.	Lack of communication between teachers and teachers and parents.
Parents wish to have more contact with teachers	School policies and procedures block communications
Parents and teachers feel the need to implement the Resource Program.	Low teacher morale
Teachers wish to have input into school policies	Parents feel their opinions are worthless
Parents desire input into program and policies	Parents annoyed by lack of information from school
Parents and teachers feel that the school should educate the 'whole' child	Teachers poorly informed about the Resource program
Principal feels that community should have input into school policies	Principal perceived as an 'absentee landlord'
	Teachers resent custodian's authority
	Reg. Class teachers lack experience with Exc. Children
	Parents feel ill-at-ease with school personnel
	Parents perceive school as 'closed'
	Parents feel teachers see them as a hinderance
	Principal feels school should control children
	Principal feels teacher opinion is inconsequential
	Principal feels teachers should limit interactions in the community

X

X=Little staff interaction or Parent-teacher communication/Administrative blockage

Y

y=Implement the resource room and increase positive Teacher-teacher and parent teacher communications

and invite the central office staff to the presentation.

2. Hold a general meeting of all parents and teachers to receive information about the Resource Room/Mainstreaming Model as well as a rationale.

3. Conduct in-service training for regular classroom teachers regarding the exceptional child in the regular classroom.

4. Form a committee of parents and teachers to work with the principal on reviewing and revising school policies and procedures.

5. Have an 'open house' one day each grading period for those parents who wish to come to school to observe classes.

6. Have an 'open hour' before and after school one day a week when parents may come to school without an appointment to talk with teachers.

7. Establish a parent volunteer program to aid regular classroom and resource personnel.

Before the meeting adjourned, a task force of two parents, one resource teacher and a second, fifth, and eighth grade teacher volunteered to formulate specific objectives with the consultant and report back to the whole group (Strategy # 1)

In the interim, the consultant met with the principal to report the results of the Confrontation and share the Force Field Analysis and Strategies. The principal declined to participate in the task force and indicated that when the group reconvened, he would announce his retirement.

The group of teachers and parents who participated in the Confrontation were joined by the principal, the Associate Superintendent, and the Director of Special Services. Following the principal's announcement of his retirement, the task force presented the following objectives which met with the approval of the group:

1. Within the next three weeks, a general meeting of all parents and teachers will be held to:

    a. Receive information about PL 94-142 and the concepts of mainstreaming and the resource room from the consultant and the Director of Special Services.

    b. Recap what has taken place since consultant intervention (consultant)

c. Share strategies and objectives for program implementation. (Task Force)

d. Establish a permanent committee of parents and teachers to monitor program implementation and suggest policy and procedure revisions. (Consultant and Task Force)

e. Clarify the roles of the regular classroom teachers, resource teachers and parents. (Whole group)

RATIONALE: To insure that all parties have the same information and open lines of parent/school communications.

2. Prior to the last day of school, all teachers will receive their grade level assignments and tentative class rolls for the coming year. (Principal)

RATIONALE: To provide teachers with an opportunity to plan and familiarize themselves with new grade level materials and students.

3. Prior to the end of the school year, the committee of parents and teachers will have reviewed school policies and procedures and made recommendations for changes. Among the areas to be reviewed are:

a. Utilization of secretarial and custodial personnel.

b. Availability of materials and supplies.

c. Non-teaching responsibilities

RATIONALE: To modify organizational restraints that may be hampering the educational process and interaction with parents.

4. Following the general parent-teacher meeting, the teachers at each grade level and program area will inform their parents of a before and after school hour when they will be available to meet with them. These 'open hours' should be scheduled at two week intervals.

RATIONALE: To increase teacher accessibility. (One teacher at each grade level will coordinate)

5. By the first week of the next school year, the parent-teacher committee will meet with the principal to discuss the establishment of:

a. Weekly 'open hours.'

b. One 'open house' for each grading period.

c. A parent volunteer program.

RATIONALE: To open lines of parent-school communications.

6. By the first week of the next school year, an on-site inservice program will be available for regular classroom teachers.

RATIONALE: To provide regular classroom teachers with the skills needed to provide services to exceptional children (Consultant and Director of Special Services to coordinate)

7. By the opening of school, the following plan for Resource Room utilization will be in effect:

The resource teachers will instruct their students in the areas of Language Arts, remedial academics, and social skill development.

Students will be grouped by grade level (second, third and fourth, fifth and sixth, and seventh and eighth) and will receive one hour of instruction per day in the resource room. Thus, the Resource Teachers will spend four hours a day working with groups of children.

During the remainder of the school day, the Resource Teachers will meet with individual students for remedial work for two days a week. They will assist the regular classroom teachers for three days a week with the following:

a. Offering technical assistance in dealing with referred students.

b. Meeting with teachers to discuss specific students and their progress.

c. Making instructional recommendations to the teacher.

During the first week of school, the Resource Teachers will assess each child in their classes and prepare a chart of the child's strengths and weaknesses for the regular classroom teacher. Based upon the child's assessment, the Resource Teacher will work with the child and his teacher to build skills in his areas of weakness.

To enable the Resource Teachers to meet with regular classroom teachers, the period prior to the opening of the school day (7:45-8:15) and the period from 2:50-3:30 will be reserved for planning and conferencing. All students entering the school up to 8:15 and waiting for busses after 2:50 will report to the auditorium. Teachers will share bus duty and before school duty on a weekly rotation. Television may be used in the auditorium for the students' entertainment.

During the first month of school, the parent-teacher committee will meet with the principal to investigate the feasibility of using 8th grade students in a tutorial role for Resource Room and remedial students. (Approval of the Principal and the Director of Special Services)

RATIONALE: To improve resource room services and enable teachers to have time for planning and conferencing.

For the remainder of the school year, the consultant served in an advisory capacity to the Parent-Teacher Committee as they reviewed policy and procedures for the school and as a liaison to the new principal. The principal

seemed to be in agreement with the work of the committee and the plans for increasing parental participation and resource room utilization for the coming year. He suggested a general meeting of parents and teachers during the final week of school to share the committee's recommendations and for him to have an opportunity to meet his constituents. During this meeting, the new principal suggested that the Parent-Teacher Committee become a permanent advisory arm of the school and meet on a regular basis throughout the year. He felt that this group could monitor the implementation of mainstreaming and function as an ombudsman for parents and faculty.

During the fall of the next school year, consultant contact was limited to occasional meetings with the Parent-Teacher Committee and the principal to discuss progress and problems with the resource room utilization plan. He suggested that teachers keep a record of parent contacts during the 'open hour' and 'open house' programs and that the P.S.C.Q. be administered after the Christmas break (approximately one year after the initial intervention) to determine the permeability of the school's boundaries.

The frequency of parental visits during the 'open hours' seemed to have increased since the program was formally initiated, with a greater number of visits two weeks prior to the conclusion of a grading period. Approximately 60% of the parents had made one contact with their child's teacher in the first four months of the school year during the 'open hours.' The two 'open houses'that were held before Christmas (each was held on the fourth week of the sex week grading period) were attended by ninety-eight and one hundred twenty-seven parents respectively.

A similar procedure to the one used in the Assessment Stage was used to distribute the P.S.C.Q. Of the two hundred and sixty (260) questionnaires sent to parents, two hundred and sixteen were returned. A comparison of the profile of the P.S.C.Q. administered during the Assessment Stage with the results of the

following year is contained in Figure VI. The profiles seem to indicate gains in all factors toward a more open perception of the school by the parents.

Shortly after the P.S.C.Q. results had been tabulated, the parents and teachers who participated in the Confrontation Stage the previous year, were invited to a session to assess the progress at School A and engage in a Thre Way Confrontation. Eight of the nine parents, the three resource teachers and thirty-one teachers participated. The various groups' perceptions of the other groups seemed to indicate a high degree of congruence with the adjectives and phrases generated of a positive nature.

Although the composition of the Parent-Teacher Committee has changed, it continues to operate as an advisory board to the principal and as a monitoring and evaluation agent. Two years after the original intervention, the principal reported that parent involvement programs are still in operation and that the students in the Resource Room programs seem to be receiving quality services. He indicated that he has used Force Field Analysis to generate strategies for the implementation of a team teaching program and utilized the Assessment and Confrontation Stages to resolve a conflict between the faculty and the cafeteria workers.

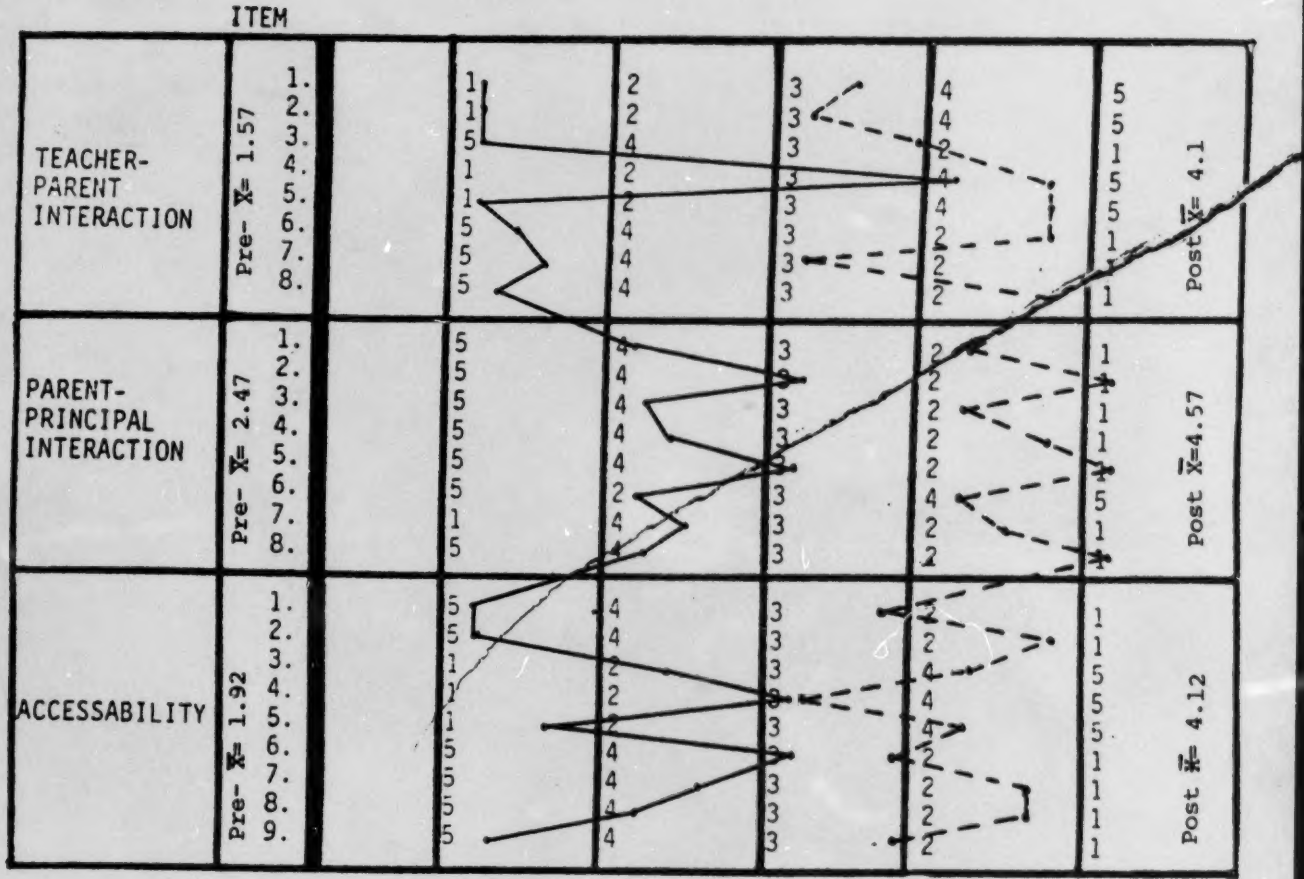
While School A's problems could be attributed to a lack of leadership, the problems at School B seemed to focus upon the attitude of the community toward profound-to-moderate and multihandicapped children and the attitude of parents of these children toward the school. PL 94-142's mandate to provide adequate and appropriate services for children regardless of their handicap along with the application of the Zero-reject concept seemed to release a torrent of hostility toward the school as parents appeared to desire all the ills of the past to be remedied immediately. As School B began to operate in a relatively 'new' (built in 1956) wing of a school that was no longer used by the school district, people in the neighborhood began to circulate a petition that the school be moved

FIGURE VI

Pre- Post- Comparison

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

PROFILE SHEET



CLOSED----------OPEN

Name of School: School A

N= Pre- 125 Post 216

District: _____

Grade Level (s): _____

Date: _____

——— Pre

-----Post

to a different site away from 'normal' people. The neighbors seemed to feel that the students would escape and rape, rob, and pillage the neighborhood. Parents also began to clammor for a new building, physical and occupational therapists, and trained and qualified teachers.

School B began as a joint venture between the three school districts in the county. Operated by one of the districts, the other two units shared the costs of operation. The three districts felt that one school for the severe/profound-to moderate and multihandicapped would be a cost effective method of providing services for a relatively small population (twenty-six children between ages 5-19 when the school opened).

School B began its operation with a staff of three teachers and six aides, with one of the teachers acting as the director. The student population was composed of severe to profoundly mentally handicapped and multihandicapped children, many of whom were non-ambulatory. Four months later, three additional teachers and six aides were transferred to School B to provide services for the intermediate Trainable Mentally Handicapped Classes (approximately thirty students between the ages of 12 and 21).

The teachers of the severe/profoundly mentally handicapped and multihandicapped classes had received some training for the population of students they were serving; however, their experience was with mildly handicapped students. The director of the program had no administrative experience and was closely supervised by the Superintendent of Schools. Two of the teachers of the intermediate trainable classes were certified in Mental Retardation and had a number years of experience in their area. The third teacher had a background in vocational education and limited experience with trainable youngsters. It should be pointed out that at the time School B was established, specific university certification programs fir teachers of the severe/profoundly retarded, multihandicapped, and trainable mentally handicapped were not available in the state.

The consultant had been familiar with School B since its inception.

He had worked with the school district on the initial funding application and served on the Board of Directors of a private non-profit school for multihandicapped children which was absorbed by School B.

Intervention was requested by one of the participating school districts through the Director of Special Education and endorsed by the Superintendent whose district sponsored School B.

The initial step in the Assessment Stage was to meet with representitives of the three school districts and the Director of the school to gain a perspective of the problem and plan a strategy for collecting data about the impact School B was having upon the parents and the community. Representitives of two of the three school districts and the Director were present at the meeting. They perceived a twofold problem:

1. That the parents of students at School B, especially those who had children in the severe/profound and multihandicapped program, had unrealistic expectations for the school and that many felt that additional services would 'cure' their children.

2. That people who lived in the area surrounding School B had little knowledge of mental retardation and handicapping conditions and associated mental retardation with mental illness. They appeared to hold a variety of negative stereotypes of the children attending School B and their exposure to the students as they arrived and left school tended to reinforce these stereotypes.

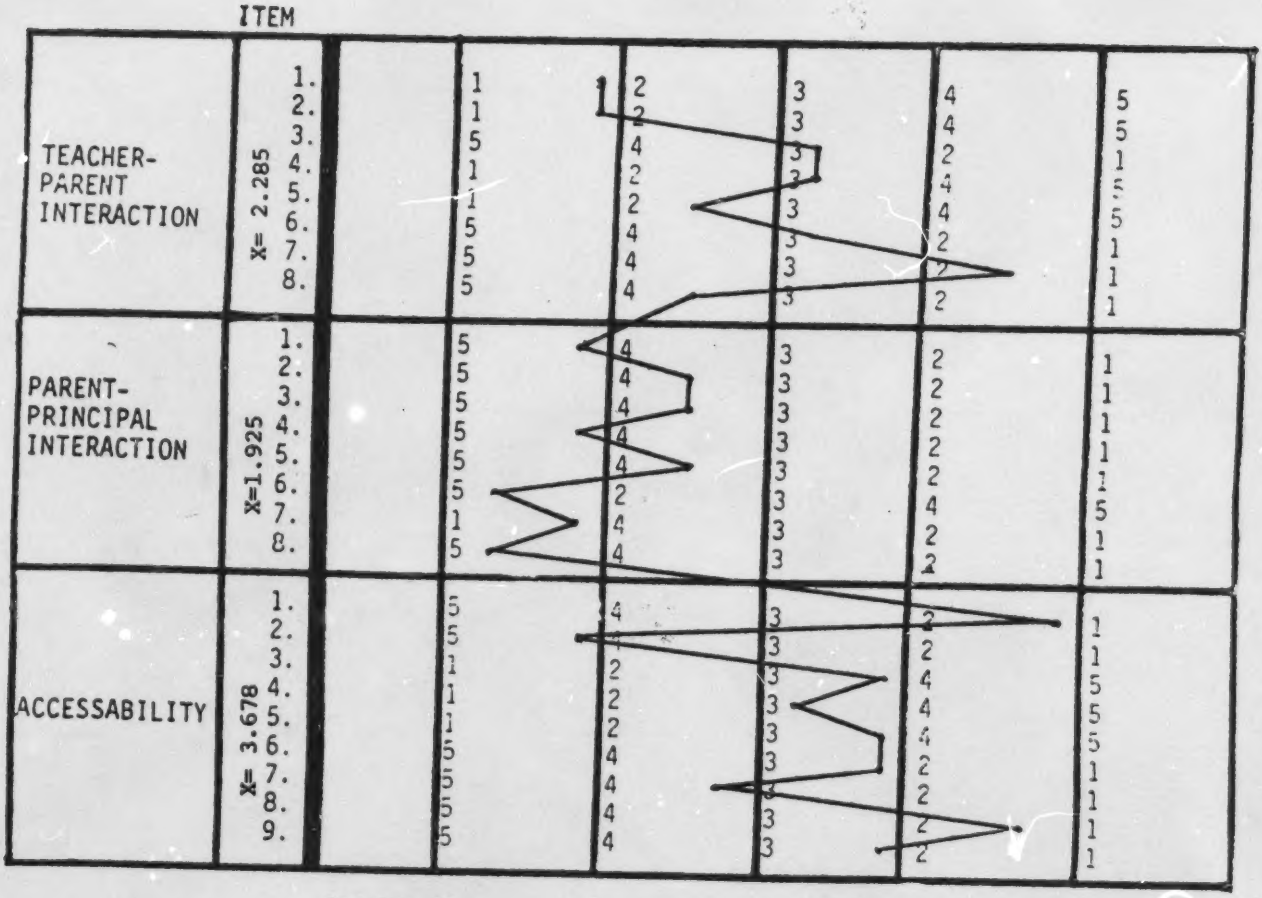
A strategy for the Assessment Stage that emerged from the meeting was to change some of the wording of the P.S.C.Q. to make the questions more pertinent to the School B situation (e.g. 'Director' for 'Principal') and send it to all of the parents in each program area. To gain the'community perspective,' the consultant would conduct interviews with the neighbors of School B who lived in a two block area around the school.

The P.S.C.Q. was sent to fifty-six parents and fifty responses were returned. The P.S.C.Q. Profile in Figure VII seems to indicate

FIGURE VII

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

PROFILE SHEET



CLOSED----------OPEN

Name of School: School B N= 50

District: _____

Grade Level (s): _____

Date: _____

that the parents feel that the teachers are threatened by them (T-P I item 2) and may shun parental contacts (T-P I item 8). Although there seems to be a flow of information between parents and teachers (T-P I items 3 and 4), some parents feel that the teacher may react negatively to their child if they make negative comments (T-P I item 5). Parents appear to perceive the Director as impermeable (P-P I mean=1.92). They seem to view her as listening to parents, but not making use of their input (P-P I item 4). Parents tend to perceive teachers at School B as accessible (A items 1, 5, and 8), but the Director as isolated (A item 5). Communications from teachers to parents appear to be personal in tone (A item 3 and 6), and the parents feel that they are generally free to stop at school to meet with teachers (A items 8 and 9).

In addition to responding to the questionnaire, parents were asked to give their impressions of School B in a short answer question. Thirty-four of the respondents indicated that School B's physical plant was inadequate and that they were displeased with the services available to their children. They seemed to feel that additional services were promised, but not in evidence. Among the services that the parents felt were lacking were full-time physical, occupational, and speech therapists and on-site swimming instruction. They also felt some frustration with the lack of progress their children had made since they began attending School B (a period of six months)

The consultant attempted to interview twenty-eight of School B's neighbors. Twelve agreed to speak with him. Each respondent was asked if he were aware of School B and the type of students it served. Additional questions contered around their impressions of the school and how they felt it would affect them.

All respondents were aware of School B's presence in the

neighborhood, but were unsure of the type of students attending it. One respondent indicated that she thought they were retarded while others thought they were 'crazy' or 'sick', and questioned why they weren't in an institution. Two of the respondents felt that the students in School B would spread disease throughout the neighborhood and all twelve feared the escape of one of the students as it would 'reap havoc.' Such 'havoc' included molesting their children, rape, assault, murder, and exposing themselves in public. Ten of the twelve indicated that the value of their property would decrease if School B were not relocated.

The results of the Assessment were relayed to a meeting of the representitives of the three school districts and the Director of School B. The Director agreed with the parent's assessment of the school, stating that as their demands esculated, she had become less available and more hostile. She requested the group to take some kind of action to make the school less accessible to parents. The Director related an incident that took place two months prior. A Downs Syndrome student ran away from the school and was found by one of the neighbors peering through her window. The Director felt this may have contributed to some of the negativism toward the school.

The consultant felt that engagement in the Confrontation Stage at this point would be counterproductive. The high emotional state of parents and the community might tend to shift the effect of the exercise from an objective sharing of perceptions and feelings to an irrational ventilation of hostility that would set the community, parents and the school at a further distance from each other. An intermediate step in the process was to approach the State Department of Public Instruction's Division of School Planning and Division for Exceptional Children for a small planning grant and technical

assistance to develop the physical plant and program at School B. After a promise of assistance was secured, a general meeting of parents, community, teachers, and administrative representitives of the three school districts would be called to discuss the present status of School B and elicit parent and community input into the planning process. It was felt that this strategy would be perceived as a move 'in good faith' on the part of the parentsand serve to alleviate some of the fears on the part of the community. The intent was to de-esculate some of the hostility so that the various facets of School B's environment could engage in a productive relationship.

A planning grant of approximately $2,000 was secured from the State to pay for consultants and travel expenses and a meeting was called. Personal invitations were issued to the neighbors.

The meeting was attended by fifty-two parents, twenty-eight of the neighbors, the teachers and aides from School B, the Superintendent of the sponsoring school district, and the Special Education Directors of the participating districts. A representitive from the State Department's Division for Exceptional Children outlined the characteristics of the severe/profoundly mentally handicapped, multihandicapped and trainable mentally handicapped and their behavioral and skill expectations. The Assistant Director of the Division of School Planning emphasized the importance of community and parental input into the planning process. Both representitives entertained questions and provided information that seemed to decrease the level of hostility that had been present at the beginning of the meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the consultant announced that a planning grant to improve the program and facilities at School B had been awarded. He indicated that the planning process would begin in March and continue through the end of the school year.

Parents and members of the community were invited to participate and a sign-up list was circulated. Parents questioned the effect of their input in planning and some of the nieghbors felt that their involvement would be an attempt to 'brainwash' them into accepting the school. The Superintendent of the sponsoring school district agreed that community participation was an attempt to win support for the school and pledged to convey the results of the planning process to the County Commissioners for funding a new building on the present site and additional staff positions. Thirty parents and fifteen of the neighbors indicated that they would participate.

Prior to the first planning meeting, the consultant met with the Director of Special Education (who was instrumental in securing the grant) to lay out a format for the meetings. The participating school districts had requested the sponsoring district to follow through with the planning effort. Although the informational meeting had served to quiet some of the hostilities of the neighbors and parents, a high level of tension between these groups and the school still seemed to be present. It was felt that entry into the Confrontation Stage during the first meeting would serve to lessen tension, clarify perceptions, and correct misconceptions so that subsequent planning sessions would be productive. Following the Confrontation, participants would be asked to engage in some preliminary goal setting and strategy generation to give direction for future meetings.

The initial meeting of the 'Planning Committee' was attended by the teachers and aides from School B and all of the parents and neighbors who had indicated they would attend. The idea of conducting a Three Way Confrontation was met with some resistance, however, the group agreed to participate.

Parents were divided into three groups of ten; neighbors into

two groups of seven and eight; and teachers and aides into two groups: one consisting of the staff of the intermediate trainable mentally handicapped program and one composed of the faculty of the severe/ profound and multihandicapped program. The parent and neighbor groups were asked to generate perceptions of themselves, the school, and how they felt the school group perceived them. Requesting them to list perceptions about the school, rather than the teachers, was intended to elicit descriptions of the students, the school program, and the faculty, rather than just the instructional staff. The Teacher-Aide groups were asked to list perceptions of themselves, the parents, the neighbors, and how they felt these two groups saw them.

Figure VIII contains the results of the Confrontation Stage.

The clarification session following the posting of each group's perceptions gave the parents and neighbors an opportunity to interact with each other as parents took issue with all of the neighbors' perceptions of the school. The interchange between the parents and neighbors grew quite aggitated at times; however, it served the purpose of 'educating' the neighbors in a way that not even the most knowledgeable in the field of mental retardation and multiple handicaps could have accomplished. It appeared that the neighbors learned that they and the parents were more similar than different and that the children who attended School B exhibited a variety of mental and physical handicaps that were in no way associated with mental illness.

Parents and teachers also cleared away some of the interpersonal impediments to their communications. Teachers indicated that their lack of experience and qualifications to deal with the specific population at School B was due to the absence of training programs in the state, rather than their lack of motivation. The reason a rug donated

FIGURE VIII

Results of
Three Way Confrontation

I. Teachers and Aides
(Composite List)
N=18

A. We See Ourselves As:

Being hit from all sides
Professional
Trying to do our best
Untrained
Frustrated
Liking the students
Wanting to help the students but not knowing what's best
Harrassed by parents
Needing Help
Willing to work hard
Whipping boys
Wanting to cooperate
Tense
Tired
Glorified baby sitters
Needy: More materials needed but no money to buy them
Not cohesive
Lacking experience
concerned
Very dedicated
Wanting to know more
Cooperative

B. We See Parents As:

Unreasonable
Dissatisfied
Self centered
Uncooperative
Highly concerned
Wanting to blame someone for their children

B. We See Parents As (Cont'd)

Angry and frustrated
Unrealistic
Thinking they know all the answers
Well meaning
Over protective
Expecting too much of their children
Rigid
Guilt ridden
Wanting miracles
Angry
Hard to get along with
Intimidating
Ungrateful
Caring
Not giving us a chance
Hard working
Having a heavy cross to bear
Thinking they're low class citizens with a low class school

C. We See the Neighbors As:

Selfish
Ignorant
Closed-minded
Hostile
Afraid
Uninformed
Rigid
Not willing to give us a chance
Unreasonable

D. Parents See Us As:

Uncooperative
Babysitters
Uncaring
Trying to do our best
Easily intimidated
Unfriendly
Untrained
On the bottom of our profession
Unsympathetic
Enemies
Lazy
Wanting to help
Inadequate

E. Neighbors See Us As:

An insane asylum in their backyard
Unable to manage our children
A place for weirdos
Ruining their neighborhood

FIGURE VIII

Results of
Three Way Confrontation

II. Parents
(Composite List)
N=30

A. We See Ourselves As:

Frustrated
Deserving more than we're getting
Hard Working
Wanting the best for our children
Wanting our children to be like other children
Caring
Not as important as 'normal' parents
Good Christians
Fighters
Discriminated against
Not listened to
Angry at being put down
Unsatisfied
Cooperative
Wanting to work with them

B. We See the School AS:

Old
A Hand-me-down
Unqualified teachers
Babysitters
Not wanting to help
Needing to do much more
Not giving us the things they know our children need
Uncooperative
Uncaring
Trying to do right
Just going through the motions
Trying to pacify us
Listening because they have to
Not wanting to change
Turning down our offers

C. The School Sees Us As:

Demanding
Unreasonable
Good Christians
Wanting the best for our children
Angry
Hard workers and hard fighters
Good parents
Caring
Unaccepting
Dissatisfied
Interfering
Troublemakers

FIGURE VIII

Results of
Three Way Confrontation

III. Neighbors
(Composite List)
N=15

A. We See Ourselves As:

Wanting to keep what we've worked hard for
God-Fearing Christians
Hard working
Mad
Afraid for our families safety
Not wanting to see our neighborhood turn into a slum
Smart enough to know when we've been done wrong
Normal
Sane
Wanting what's good for our community
Willing to listen

B. We See the School As:

Full of crazy people
A waste of our money
They should be put away
Bad for the Community
Not a school-a place for children who should be put away
Not listening to tax payers
Afraid of us
Run by women

C. The School Sees Us As:

Troublemakers
Wanting what's right
Against them
Not understanding what they're doing
Not listening to them
Stupid
Wanting them out of their neighborhood

by several parents had not been placed in one of the classrooms was clarified when the parents learned that some of the children were highly allergic to the materials in the rug. It seemed that other similar incidents had caused some rather severe blockaged to positive parent-teacher relationships.

Following the Confrontation, the groups felt that the planning process could be productive and agreed to develop some guidelines for future planning sessions. Operating as a large group, participants generated the following framework for future meetings:

1. There appeared to be a need for consultation with individuals who had set up similar schools. Thus, each session should feature a short presentation from a consultant who was knowledgeable and experienced in the field of severe/profound and multihandicapped and the trainable mentally handicapped followed by a work session where the consultant would provide information specific to the planning for a new physical plant and program at School B.

2. As School B would serve a population of students ranging from 3-to-21, small age level groups of up to twelve should be set up with participants selecting a group that best met their area of interest and/or experience. It was suggested that these groups remain consistent throughout the planning process and that they be composed of a cross-section of parents, neighbors, and School B staff.

3. An outline for planning that would be followed by each group seemed to be needed. This would give some direction to the process and enable each group to share pland for their area during the latter sessions.

The responsibility for building upon the structure suggested by the group was delegated to the consultant and the Director of Special Education. The format for the planning sessions follows:

1. During six of the eight three-hour sessions, consultants from the following areas made short presentations and gave groups specific assistance in planning:

   a. Session I - Two Directors of Special Education who had set up schools for the severe/profound and multihandicapped students in their districts gave the group specifics to include and avoid in their plans.

   b. Session II - The Director of the State Department of Public Instruction-Division for Exceptional Children

detailed programs throughout the Southeast along with the Division's expectations for the school.

c. Session III - A representitive from the Division of Vocational Education of the State Department of Public Instruction generated a number of curricular and physical plant ideas to enhance vocational skill development in each of the age groupings.

d. Session IV - The Chairperson of the Department of Special Education at an area university outlined programs in the areas of self-help skill development and maximizing mobility skills.

e. Session VI- A Program Evaluator and Professor of Special Education gave the group information about continuous individual assessment and how to develop evaluation plans for the components of the program.

f. Session VII - The Director of the Division of School Planning of the State Department of Public Instruction discussed regulations pertinent to School B and reacted to suggestions for the physical plant of the new facility.

2. One session (Session V) was designated a work session and the last session was devoted to sharing and generating strategies to implement plans.

3. The sixty-three (63) participants chose one of the following five groups based upon their indication of interest and/or experience. Each group was structured to provide a balance of School B staff, parents and neighbors.

   a. Group 1 - Ages 0-2 (Although this age group was not presently being served through school programs, interest in this area led to the formation of this group whose focus would be on early identification and intervention programs).

   b. Group 2 -Ages 3-5

   c. Group 3 - Ages 6-10

   d. Group 4 - Ages 11-14

   e. Group 5 - Ages 15-21

4. A planning guide was developed by the consultant and distributed to each participant for use during the sessions. The intent of the guide was to enable participants to focus on specifics and justify whatever programmatic or physical alterations to School B they felt were needed.

   In addition, the guide was intended to form a basis for the Strategizing Stage.

Use of the Planning Guide would enable participants and groups to generate the following kinds of information:

a. The Present Program and Its Purposes: Groups were asked to list the components of the present program for the age group they were working with and the objectives they felt that each component was meeting.

This activity let each group member focus upon the specifics of the present program and question the effectiveness of each program facet. (e.g., both of the adolescent groups cited the use of age inappropriate materials for teaching reading and math to the trainable students as lacking a defensible objective, as the ability level of the students and their exposure to the same materials for a number of years had failed to develop any reading skills.)

b. The Future Program and Its Purposes: Participants were requested to delineate the components of a program for the age group they were working on which were not presently in existance, but which they felt were necessary. The objectives and rationale for each new component were also stated.

c. Prioritizing Future Program Components: Groups were asked to reach a consensus regarding the priority of each new program component by individually ranking the component on a twenty point Likert-type scale ranging from "Component is needed, but not essential" to "Component is essential and needs to be included now." Computation of the mean score for each component determined its priority rank.

The prioritizing of program facets enabled the planners to determine a tentative time frame for the implementation of the entire program by differentiating between essential and less essential parts of the overall program

d. Future Building Needs: Based upon the present and future programs and the group's priority for implementing the program components, the participants were requested to list the type of building and/or additional facilities they felt were necessary to house the program. They were encouraged to sketch their plans and, using the priority ranking as a guide, state the building needs for the next three years.

e. Statement of Factors That Would Help or Hinder Plan Implementation: Groups were asked to consider their entire program along with their knowledge of the resources available in the community and state and list all of the factors that they felt would enable the program for their age group to be implemented along with the factors they thought would block program implementation.

This portion of the Planning Guide was intended to heighten the awareness of the participants regarding the realities of placing a program into operation along with introducing them to the Force Field Analysis technique as a planning tool.

f. Listing Ways to Put The Program Into Operation: This facet of the Planning Guide requested participants to list as many strategies as they could think of that would maximize the positive factors for implementing their programs and/or minimize the impact of the negative factors.

Analogous to the strategy generation phase of the Force Field Analysis technique, this phase of the planning process was designed to uncover a general direction for program implementation as well as explore relationships group members had with individuals in the state and community that could assist in placing the program into operation.

The format for the planning process was outlined to the participants at the initial session and copies of the Planning Guide were distributed. Each age level work group was asked to appoint a facilitator who would be responsible for keeping the group on task and submitting the results of the work completed to the consultant. In between meetings, the consultant made copies of each group's work for distribution to the other groups. It was felt that such a sharing of information would lead to a cross fertilization of ideas and provide reinforcement to the groups.

During the final session, the consultant constructed a composite Force Field Analysis consisting of approximately one hundred and fifty driving and restraining forces that been taken from the 'Help' and 'Hinder' factors each group had isolated. In addition, a synthesitization of the strategied from each group was presented for discussion and revision. Operating as a large group, the participants generated a number of objectives for the next twelve month period based upon the strategies they had delineated.

A number of objectives consisted of contacting political allies to apply pressure on individuals in county and state government to

secure funds and approval of the project once a complete proposal had been drafted. The salient objectives for the next twelve months included:

1. By June 15, the membership of the Planning Committee will reconvene to discuss, revise, and approve a detailed proposal for programmatic and physical plant changes at School B. (To be prepared by the Consultant and the Director of Special Education)

2. During the June 15 meeting, the Planning Committee will elect a committee of two parents, two members of the School B staff, and two neighbors to act as an advisory panel to the Consultant and Director of Special Education as they implement the strategies. The advisory panel will meet on a monthly basis.

3. Within thirty days after approval of the proposal by the Planning Committee, a meeting of the Advisory Panel, the Consultant, and the Three Superintendents of the participating school districts will be held to review the proposal and implementation strategies. During the meeting funding sources will be explored. (Consultant to arrange).

4. By October 30, the proposal will be revised, if necessary, for submission to County and State governments for funding through the proper channels. (Consultant, Advisory Panel and representitives of the participating school districts to collaborate).

5. By June 30, receipt of funding notifications by the sponsoring school district.

6. By July 1, secure an architect to plan the building, making use of the specifications generated by the Planning Committee.

In addition to these broad objectives, a number of objectives were generated for implementing high priority portions of the program in the existing School B building.

During the next twelve months the participating school districts were quite responsive to the plans and objectives for School B. Funding from local, State and Federal sources were secured for various parts of the program and building and the sponsoring school district for School B employed an architect (prior to notification of outside funding) to incorporate the educational and building specifications into a preliminary plan for the School B physical plant. Services

of a physical therapist were secured and arrangements were made with the local Y.M.C.A. to conduct weekly swimming classes for the School B students. Local Human Resources agencies (Mental Health, Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Services, Public Health) were contacted to explore pertinent resources. An interagency case management committee and access to to such programs as Respite Care, counseling for parents and parental support groups, and the Vocational Rehabilitation System resulted.

One month prior to the close of school, the P.S.C.Q. was administered to the seventy-two parents of students who were enrolled in School B. The seventy responses that were returned are profiled in Figure IX in comparison to the original P.S.C.Q. administration. The openness of School B seemed to be characterized by increases in teacher-parent interaction and parental perceptions of the accessibility to the school and its personnel. It appeared that the Director of School B continued to maintain an isolationistic attitude toward the parents.

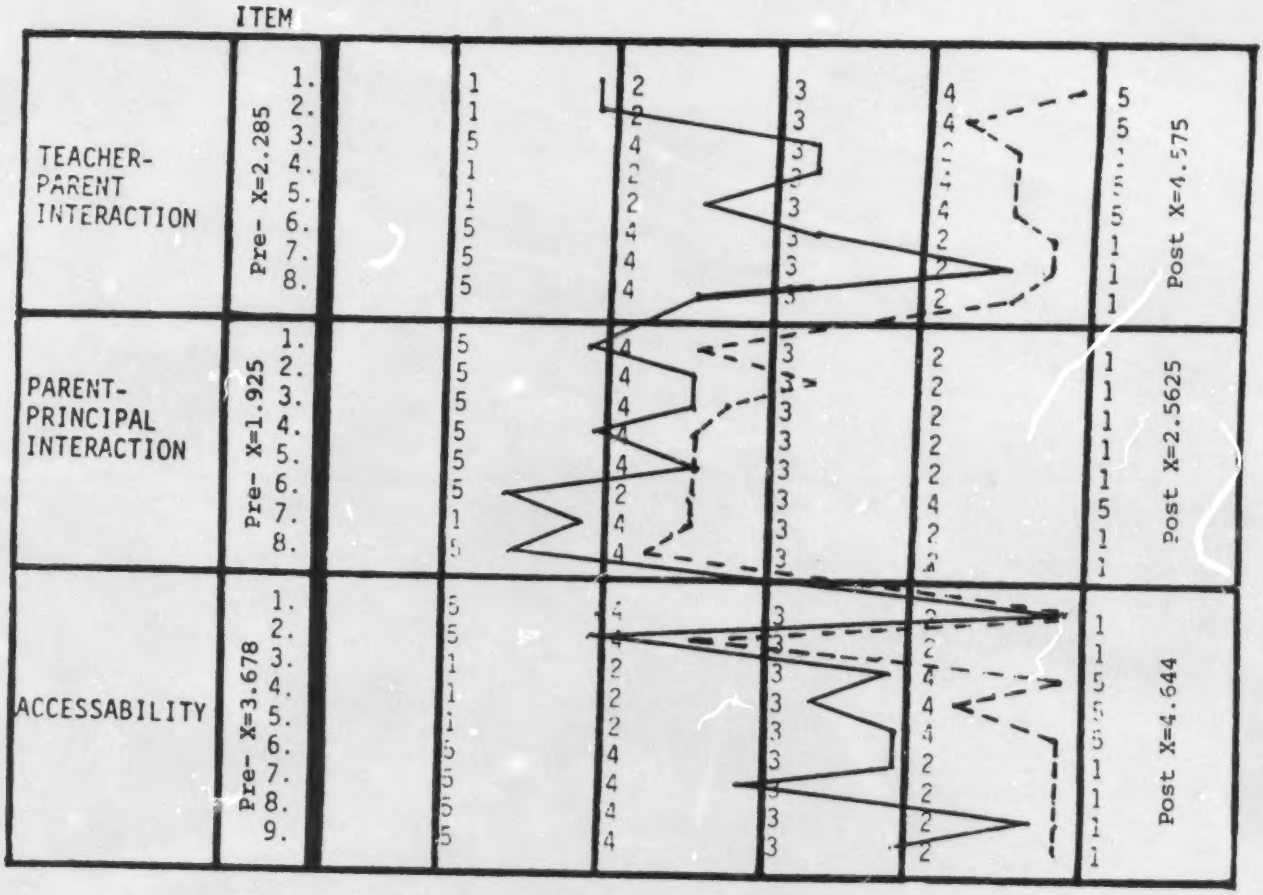
During the final month of the school year, the Planning Committee was reconvened to receive a progress report and engage in a Three Way Confrontation. Twenty-four teachers and aides, thirty parents and twelve of the neighbors participated. Similar methods were employed as in the original Confrontation. The hostility and incongruent perceptions of the groups that had existed during the first confrontation seemed to be in the past, as the adjectives and phrases used to characterize perceptions of each group seemed to be highly positive and complimentary. The only negative perceptions were generated by the parent groups about the Director of School B with regard to lack of interaction and an attitude of rejection of parental input. The Director felt an adequate job was being done in providing services to

FIGURE IX

Pre- Post- Comparison

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

PROFILE SHEET



CLOSED----------OPEN

Name of School: School B

N= Pre- 50 Post 70

District: _____

Grade Level (s): _____

Date: _____

———Pre

-----Post

students and felt this was a criticism of style and personality.

The additional funds that were received by School B led to a completion of the building on the original site approximately two and a half years after the Planning Committee had approved the proposal. Programmatic and additional services appeared to be pleasing parents and instructional staff. Student skill acquisition also showed gains. With a growing school enrollment, a full-time Principal was hired to replace the Director who, prior to replacement, had esculated parental hostility and apparently caused the withdrawel of Federal project funds from the school.

Although Advisory Panel and consultant support have been gradually withdrawn coincidental to the dissipation of outside funding, periodic administration of the P.S.C.Q. and informal contacts with parents and staff seem to indicate that School B remains an open system that appears to be permeable to input from its parental constituents and members of the community.

Importance of Study: Conclusions and Implications:

The goal of this paper has been to present an intervention model that appears to be workable for use in crisis situations as well as in the planning process. The rather detailed accounts of the operationalization of the Assessment-Confrontation-Strategizing Model in School A and School B were intended to demonstrate the versatility and flexibility of the Model in dealing with a crisis situation that eminated from within a school (School A), and a critical episode caused by factors outside the boundaries of a school (School B). Although the progression through the stages of the Model were similar in each situation, the Strategizing Stage in the School B situation was modified to an on-going process to meet the needs of the situation and the climate and capabilities of the group.

Although the format of the three stages of the Model seems to remain constant in a variety of situations, the data collected in the Assessment Stage can be expanded to provide additional information about the dynamics of the system. For example, issues regarding the teachers' perception of the School A organization and the principal's style of leadership seemed to be salient factors contributing to the lack of success of the resource program at the time of intervention. The focus of this paper is placed on the interaction between the school and its environment. The case examples are intended to clarify, thus details regarding the collection of information about the internal structure of School A's organization were omitted. Such data was collected and used by the consultant and school personnel to verify impressions of the organization and evaluate the outcome of the intervention. Thus,a number of instruments and data gathering strategies may be used in the Assessment process. Their selection should be guided by the issue and the segments of the school and its environment that appear to be involved. This line of thinking was followed in School B. Information about the school organization and the values of the groups toward education did not appear to be pertinent at the time of intervention; however, once the crisis situation had been resolved, organizational factors, values toward education, and the Director's leadership style seemed to emerge as prime causes of conflict.

The Assessment-Confrontation-Strategizing Model provided the foundation of a Federally funded project to assist school principals to implement programs for exceptional children. The goal of this project is to enable administrators to gain competence in the application of the Model in their schools so that their organization may provide services suited to the student population, the level of

expertise of the faculty, and the needs of the school's community.

The examples cited in this paper and the situations that were described centered around the implementation of programs for exceptional children. The passage of PL 94-142 seems to have provided one of the greatest thrusts for change in education that has been experienced to date. Aside from the utilization of this model in areas relating to Special Education, its application can be made to many situations to resolve seemingly irreconcilable communication crises and/or eradicate causes of conflict prior to implementing any organizational or programmatic change.

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